



Florida House of Representatives

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House Democrats Vote Against Increased Education Funding

Tallahassee, Fla. – Florida House Majority Leader Carlos Lopez-Cantera (R-Miami) today issued the following statement regarding the House Democrats' unanimous vote against the General Appropriations Act, which includes a \$1.1 billion increase in new education funding.

"I applaud House Republicans for their prioritization of education in Florida and their willingness to increase education funding by \$1.1 billion. It is unfortunate that our Democratic colleagues have put political posturing ahead of our state's youth," stated Leader Lopez-Cantera.

The House budget provides that the FEFP (Florida Education Finance Program) increase by \$1 billion from the current year, an increase in per student funding of 2.27%. The House budget includes funding for class size compliance at \$2.986 billion and additionally increases funding for the growing Voluntary Prekindergarten program by \$28.5 million over last year's budget.

"Last session we made difficult choices that have produced positive results. We were condemned by the House Democrats for making cuts and criticized for our stance against raising taxes, but independent financial groups have affirmed the budget and policy choices we made last session. Those choices were directly responsible for upgrading Florida to a stable AAA bond rating, resulting in lower interest rates, potentially saving our taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars and instilling confidence in the job market. We've also seen our unemployment rate drop more than 2 points," continued Leader Lopez-Cantera.

"In the House budget, we have lived up to our promise to protect the precious tax dollars that our citizens have entrusted to us. And dedicating ourselves to our principles - limiting the scope of government and lower taxes - we will lead our state once again in our constitutionally allotted 60-day session toward a better and more prosperous future for Florida."

The House General Appropriations Act and budget conforming bills will now be heard in the 2012 Legislative Budget Conference.

